

WEATHER

Cloudy,
Colder Tonight
and Sunday

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Nothing
but the
Truth

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'He Who Blackens Another Never Whitens Himself'—Proverb



Cut Out Gossip Before It Cuts Some One's Throat!

ONE step you can take to help make this a BETTER WORLD is to *stop gossip*.

Abolish malicious slander and most misfortunes will abolish themselves.

More troubles have been started by a loose tongue than in any other way.

More sorrows have come from *little lies* than from *big crimes*.

It is possible, said wise Ben Jonson, to "cut men's throats with whisperings."

And Coleridge: "Whispering tongues can poison truth."

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"THOU shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor" was one of the Ten Commandments observed by the Hebrew patriarchs.

This law was placed *directly after* the commandment "Thou shalt not steal."

It was placed *before* the commandment against coveting.

It was placed in the *same great moral code* that forbade murder, idolatry and adultery.

There are great outcries against these other offenses, but idle gossip goes its murderous way unchecked and often unproved.

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GREAT careers are sometimes wrecked by a careless word.

Spotless reputations are tarnished by the venom that drips from careless mouths.

The nation has seen a spectacle of that in a notorious murder trial.

In an effort to convict four persons, every

bit of idle chatter that the neighborhood had spawned was dug up.

Where substantial proof was lacking, insinuations and surmises, guesses and rumors, were repeated . . . moldering ghosts of a dead past were dragged out.

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PERSONS who would not think of committing a major crime often have no hesitancy in putting mere "hunches" into words and repeating them as though they were facts.

This is true in many cases at law.

People become so wrapped up in *what they suspect* that they wind up by asserting it as *truth*.

Witnesses often fool themselves.

They have great difficulty, however, in fooling a jury.

Confronted by the common sense of twelve good men and true, slander has a habit of shrinking back into its proper position, its menace destroyed.

That truth so often prevails in court is due to the solemnity of the surroundings, and even more to the test of *cross-examination*.

Witnesses whose stories sound plausible at first often show themselves up as *liars* when a few pointed questions are put to them.

Gossip is not powerful in court.

But in civilian life it is a decided menace.

The average person does not know how to cross-examine a tale bearer.

FOR the very reason that there is no way of meeting its attack, gossip is one of the meanest of offenses.

It is worse than a stab in the back, for, as a Chinese proverb points out:—

*The slanderer kills a thousand times,
The assassin kills but once.*

Every one who reads this will call to mind some acquaintance who gossips.

You can without trouble recall something mean that this person has said against some mutual friend.

Just a few words, perhaps, that have caused you to look with suspicion upon a person whom you had always regarded with intense admiration.

You may feel in your heart that what has been whispered about this person is not true, but *doubt has been raised*. Confidence has been undermined.

You can do your part in stopping that sort of trouble.

Ask the one who bears such slimy gossip to you FOR PROOF.

Remember that it is a rule of law to presume that *accused persons are innocent* until they are proved guilty.

Your friends have an equal right to expect you to *presume them innocent*.

If proof of gossip cannot be produced, tell the tale bearer to stop his loose talking.

It will not always be possible to bring results, for gossiping is a habit as deep-lying and as hard to eliminate as the drug habit.

But at least you can REFUSE TO LISTEN to any more of his tales.

And you yourself can refrain from passing along the bad word.